

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. Present were Chair, Joan Duff, members Vincent Chiozzi, Jay Doherty, Eric Macaux and Lelani Loder, and Associate Member Zach Bergeron; also present were Paul Materazzo, Director of Planning and Lisa Schwarz, Senior Planner.

Scope of Work - Town Park Master Plan:

Lisa Schwarz, Senior Planner, explained that over the last six years, different groups have approached the Town Manager with suggestions of different uses for The Park. He would like to gather information from the community and put a plan in place for the Board of Selectmen. The purpose of this kickoff meeting is to review the Draft Scope of Work and to do a S.W.O.T. analysis of the identified areas. At the end of this meeting, topics will be assigned to meeting dates so that people can attend the meetings that they are most interested in. From these meetings a plan can be developed and several recommendations can be presented to the Board of Selectmen so that they have a document that they can reference in the future.

Ms. Schwarz reviewed the Draft Scope of Work and explained that the parcel encompasses not only The Park, but also the Town Offices, Doherty Middle School, the Playstead and the Youth Center. She explained that a big component of this project is the mature trees in the area which should be protected, so part of the plan is figuring out how to nurture and keep the current resources. Ms. Schwarz asked the Board if they had any questions or comments on the Draft Scope of Work. Ms. Duff answered that she thought it was a great idea to put it in two parts of gathering data and then compiling it into a vision.

Ms. Schwarz began the S.W.O.T. analysis asking the Board what they felt were the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the area. The Board felt that the strengths were the location, parking, frequent use, and that it is an area that serves a lot of purposes for different ages and demographics. The weaknesses they identified were that parking is a problem during the week days, a lack of benches or places to sit, overall maintenance issues including an accumulation of garbage, a lack of monitoring and insufficient signage. The Board felt the opportunities for the area were having more public events, green opportunities such as bike racks, community gardens and shade opportunities. The threats identified were that any improvements or long term upkeep will need to be funded. This may not be the right time to make any improvements due to the Youth Center and Doherty School construction. Also seen as a threat were the health of the trees and any liabilities that may come from new apparatus.

Ms. Duff opened the floor to comments from members of the audience. Susan Stott of 30 Pasho Street stated that a strength of The Park is that it is used all of the time. One weakness of The Park is that there is not a place for small children to play safely, so they all play on the cannon which is very dangerous.

Susan Lindholm of 44 Chestnut Street stated that her family has been at their residence abutting The Park since the 1920s. She observes that parking is not available from 8am – 6pm, or anytime there is an event. Downtown workers and commuters park there, leaving no spaces for people who want to use The Park. The Town needs to pay more attention to the trash and provide more trash containers, because right now a volunteer from the Senior Center maintains it. Due to the lack of lighting, kids come at night and hide in the bushes. From the handouts and

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material sent to her home she doesn't really understand what they are trying to do with The Park. Ms. Schwarz answered that they are not necessarily trying to do anything. The Town Manager has been approached from different groups and even Town departments with ideas for The Park and the Selectmen want to have something concrete in hand with uses that they can support, or with an opinion for The Park to stay as is. The outcome may be that there are just a few things that we can tweak to make it better. Ms. Lindholm added that there are very few mature healthy trees left. The diversity of the trees is gone because when a tree dies it is replaced with a maple.

Cal Perry, 25 Timothy Drive, stated that the two pieces of property should be dealt with separately. The Park is several memorials and may contain more at some period of time. Sanctity in the memorials would be lost if anything was put in The Park that created noise, especially dogs and children running around. It should stay as a quiet place where people can walk and think about the memorials. The back side is a different situation. The addition of lights would be annoying to the neighbors and the noise, the trash, the dogs and the maintenance cost from putting in any kind of a juvenile play area would be a disaster.

Nancy McCormack, 4 Whittier Court, asked about the gentleman who picks up the trash every morning. Andrea Zaines from the Senior Center answered that he is John Pasquale, a senior volunteer who is currently finished his hours and is taking a break. Ms. McCormack added that she sees him out there every morning and if he wasn't, there would be trash everywhere.

Stacey Murphy of 51 Bartlet Street stated that she lives directly across the street from the new parking at the Doherty Middle School. She understands why trees had to be taken down for the reconfiguration of the parking lot and circulation, but the beauty is now gone. She hopes that people remember that it is a community where people live and not just a downtown. Any changes affect their homes and their resale values. She would like to see the beauty to be brought back to that area by adding trees. Ms. Schwarz added that the diversity of trees should be looked to avoid too many of the same tree. Ms. Murphy stated that a wall was put in between the parking lot and the soccer field, but above that there is a chain link fence, and she hopes that it is not staying. Andrea Zaines, stated that she was told an ornamental fence is going up above the wall and the plateau field is being reseeded so it will be closed this fall. There is also handicap access to the upper level of the Stowe field now.

Jane Gifun, 9 Castle Heights Road, asked what people are proposing for The Park. Ms. Schwarz answered that people have inquired about potential future memorials, a playground and more events, but nothing structural has been brought up or changes to circulation. The Selectmen are hoping that a guidance document can be produced for them for the future. There is not a lot of history of the area of The Park in print, so this is an opportunity to gather that information. Ms. Gifun reminded Ms. Schwarz that they need to be mindful of the fact that there is a brook that runs underneath the Park. Ms. Schwarz added that to the threats and noted that it is something to be aware of in the future.

Charles Leinbach of 2 Whittier Court stated that he lives right next to Rogers Brook and he can report that there is still flooding. The Town should examine carefully anything to goes in that would impede the flow of water. His family loves the Park and he is glad that the Town is

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having this forum so that the residents can express themselves. Things with the Park are generally okay, but it is a relatively small space and when there are events such as Clown Town or Art in the Park, capacity is reached very quickly, and there is a lot of confusion with the parking and traffic flow. There are never enough trash cans in the Park for the events even when the vendors themselves bring in extra trash cans. The Town should also look at providing extra Police Details for these types of events because kids are being dropped off and picked up and it is very hard for residents to get in and out of their driveways with all of the extra traffic. The Town just needs to stay a little more organized.

Rick Gagnon of 6 Whittier Court stated that there are already summer concerts and he wouldn't want to see more. The Town could definitely do more about the trash. He is concerned about the possibility of a skate park or adding anything else structural until they see the impact of the Youth Center. The Town did a great job a few years ago when they redid the steps of the memorial auditorium, but he thought at the time they would have considered the whole Park. The Park could have been assessed during the discussions of the Youth Center. Ms. Schwarz acknowledged that right now the Town is being more reactive than proactive. Mr. Gagnon added that the memorial pieces of the Park are beautiful and there are probably some things that can be done with the ballfields, because fields and field use are very difficult and have to be managed. Stowe field used to have two soccer fields on it, but he does not think that you could do that anymore. Providing abutters with a list of what people were planning to put in that area would be very helpful. A lot of seniors use the track so expanding it to circulate the whole area and adding trees and benches would be a good idea. The Town needs to be cognizant of the fact that this is a beautiful part of the downtown neighborhood.

Ms. Duff stated that they are not going to make a list of things that can and cannot be in the Park. In general, they are looking for appropriate uses and if there was ever a suggestion for something like a skate park, it would go through a very thorough public review, where everyone would have an opportunity to participate. Ms. Schwarz added that two things that have come up over the last few years are a playground and future memorials. Going through the planning process of the last memorial, a lot of people came out against another memorial being put in The Park, but it came out beautiful. In the future, there may be another memorial, so now is the time to think about what works and what doesn't. In regards to potentially adding a playground, it would be a public process to decide the size, where should it go and what ages it would be suited for. Through this process recommendations can be made to the Selectmen that they may sit on, but they would still have them available.

Kevin Bibeau of 5 Old South Lane stated that one of the strengths of the Park is its tranquility. It offers a place to rest and relax and have conversations. He stated that where he grew up in Burlington, there were a lot of neighborhood parks for young children, which Andover does not have. He does feel that if you try to make the Park an all inclusive, it will lose a lot of its presence. Aesthetically it could use some low-tone lighting for people who are walking through at night. There could be upgrades to the benches and a more hospitable environment, with the memorial remaining.

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Michael Burke, Director of Veterans Services, stated that he is a 4th generation resident and he remembers playing in Rogers Brook when it would flood. He once walked through The Park with someone who was upset about the planning of it because the bandstand wasn't in the middle. This person was unaware of the brook running under the park. He is glad that this conversation has now started because every once in a while people need to be reminded of some things. When Mr. Burke became Director of Veterans Services six years ago he did research on The Park and found out that the auditorium was raised in 1936 and it is called The War Memorial Building. The War Memorial includes the auditorium, the school gymnasium and the playstead and is dedicated to 14 individuals who were killed in action in Europe. He wants to make everyone aware that anything that is done in the future in the playstead is being done in a war memorial, and will need to go through a process with the Holiday Committee. Throughout The Park there are memorials dedicated to 85 individuals from Andover who paid the ultimate sacrifice in the 20th century. Andover residents voted at the 1936 Town meeting to establish the permanent memorial. Ms. Duff noted that in the past there had been talk of trying to better educate the residents of the fact that the playstead is a war memorial. Mr. Burke stated that the Holiday Committee has expressed interest in putting a sign or a plaque in the playstead as it has done already at the building and auditorium individually. There is a group that has come forward wanted to place a sign, who have the funds to do it and Mr. Burke has informed them that the design will need to go through the Holiday Committee with very specific wording. Mr. Burke added that a baseball diamond in the playstead was named after a teacher without anyone remembering that it was a war memorial. Now that the Town is fully aware of the significance of the playstead, there is a custodial responsibility to properly review anything else that goes in to the playstead.

Susan Stott of 30 Pasho Street stated that getting the history of The Park so that you have a context when thinking about what is appropriate and what isn't appropriate will better support the needs of the community.

Dan Eldredge of 6 Elm Court stated that a great strength of The Park is that it is one of the only open spaces in the downtown neighborhood. He has little kids and he loves to have a place to take them to play without having to get in the car and drive somewhere. It is a great resource for the walking downtown community. Ms. Schwarz added that the downtown is the densest part of Town, and yes there may be parking issues, but the walkability of downtown is a great strength.

Ms Schwarz assigned topics to future meeting dates. On September 24th the Board will be discussing the history of The Park. On October 8th the Board will discuss opportunities and improvements to existing resources. There will be meetings on November 12th and 26th that will discuss other items as well as continued items.

Susan Stott of 30 Pasho Street stated that it would be very helpful to get a chronological list of all of the events that take place in The Park as well as a list of all of the groups that use the playstead to know when and how these areas are being utilized.

Irina O'Brien of 15 Elm Court stated that she is part a group that formed in the spring called the Andover Center Playground Initiative. She asked if the group could have some time during one

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of the future meetings to show their proposal and share their research. Ms. Schwarz suggested that they be put on the agenda for October 8th. She added that 3-4 months ago the playground group did meet with Mr. Burke and the Holiday Committee about their proposal.

Mr. Macaux left the meeting after the discussion on the Town Park.

89-93 Main Street:

The Board began the deliberations on an application by Jared Eigerman, Esq. of Dalton & Finegold, LLP for a Special Permit for Planned Development, Mixed Use for the property located at 89-93 Main Street, mostly commonly known as Olde Andover Village.

Mr. Materazzo reviewed the project and what was discussed at the previous public hearings. He brought the Board's attention to the memo he provided for them with 26 recommended conditions of approval for the project. He also reiterated the betterments that the applicant has already made and is planning to make to public property assuming permission is granted from the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Doherty had a question about condition no. 7 regarding the parking of construction equipment. Mr. Materazzo clarified that the applicant would have to park any construction equipment on their property unless they petitioned the Board of Selectmen for a permit to park on Main Street. Mr. Doherty then asked if overnight parking in the back will displace all day parkers. Mr. Materazzo stated that a preconstruction meeting could handle all of these issues. He also added that the building is not being built from scratch, so there will not be a lot of equipment. Mr. Chiozzi added that they will be taking up their own spaces.

Ms. Loder asked if a revision could be made to condition no. 12 which stated "prior to occupancy." She noted that parts of the building are already occupied and would prefer that it state "prior to future occupancy." She questioned condition no. 14a. which refers to unit ownership, because she thought the units were rentals. Mr. Materazzo stated that the language was used in case they are changed to ownership units in the future. It was based off of what was used on the Essex Street project.

Ms. Loder stated that condition no. 17 doesn't include the outdoor dining area. Mr. Materazzo stated that the outdoor dining license as it relates to parking is exempt. When they go to the Selectmen for permission for the patio, it may be inquired about further. Ms. Loder asked what effect the gross footprint of the project has on the parking. Mr. Materazzo stated that the proponent demonstrated a peak demand of 53 spaces. The changing of businesses shouldn't matter as long as they can continue to accommodate 53 spaces and the peak demand does not exceed said amount. Mr. Doherty added that condition no. 26 let them review the parking in the future. Condition 26 calls for a status report on parking after final lease out of the building or 18 months from the issuance of the permit, whichever comes first, or if any complaints are received by the Inspector of Buildings.

On a motion by Ms. Loder seconded by Mr. Doherty the Board moved to issue a Special Permit for Planned Development – Mixed Use in the General Business District for the project located at

89-93 Main Street (cont'd):

89-93 Main Street as presented to the Board of July 16, 2013 and August 13, 2013 subject to the 26 conditions including the inclusion of the word “future” following “prior to” in Section 12 which will be recorded at the Essex North Registry of Deeds. **Vote:** Unanimous (5-0).

Other Business:

Ms. Duff informed the Board that an engineer working on a recent project asked why he was not able to receive staff's memorandum at the same time as the Planning Board. She asked the other members of the Board if they felt the procedure should stay as it is, with the Board members receiving the memo before the meeting, or if they would be okay with the memo also being distributed to the engineers and applicants. Staff has always had a policy of only providing the memo to the Board prior to the meeting. The concern is that if the memo is made available ahead of time, changes will be made to the plans that staff will not have the opportunity to review before they are presented to the Board. The Board agreed that they would prefer the policy to stay as it is.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:58 p.m.